

History 333

THE COLD WAR; COLLOQUIUM

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“There is nothing so remote as the recent past.”
■ British playwright Alan Bennett

7 to 9 pm, Mondays, Spring Semester 2007

For nearly half a century, the world was in thrall to the Cold War. Although the standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union never turned hot, both countries invested massive amounts of human and material capital in pursuit of international supremacy, and proxy wars exacted fearful tolls. Why did the Cold War occur? Who was to blame? Was it avoidable? These questions have excited historians and other analysts for decades and stimulated a rich body of literature. With the opening of Soviet archives in recent years, these questions are more amenable to answers than in earlier years, when sources tended to be one-sided. But archives without imagination are sterile, and so the big questions about the Cold War, though now more fully grounded in primary sources, still require acts of interpretation. In this colloquium, we will examine the perennial questions about the origins of the Cold War, but we will also try to go beyond the ultimately limiting framework of who should get blamed and assess the mechanics of the Cold War. As the Cold War fades into memory – sometimes an almost nostalgic one – it may be possible to approach it with more of the dispassion of other historical subjects. Because the origins and early years of the Cold War are so complex and studied so intensively, we will limit our focus to that period. Whatever the assessment of origins in the end, it seems safe to say that, of all topics in recent history, the Cold War will surely be on that continues to animate historians for many years to come.

Required texts:

Melvyn P. Leffler & David S. Painter, eds., *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, 2d ed., Routledge, 2005. (cited as L&P)

Vladislav Zubok & Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Krushchev*, 1996. (cited as Z&P)

Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in The Global Arena*, 2001.

(A few additional reserve readings may be assigned.)

Feb. 5 The Historiography of Cold War Origins

Feb. 12 The Grand Alliance: Prelude to Disharmony?

L&P, introduction

Gabriel Gorodetsky, "The Origins of the Cold War: Stalin, Churchill, and
The Formation of the Grand Alliance: (ERES)
Z&P, chaps. 1-2

- Feb. 19 American and Soviet Strategies at the End of World War II
- Leffler and Roberts essays in L&P
Z&P, chap. 3
Frank Costigliola, "Unceasing Pressure for Penetration: Gender,
Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of
The Cold War" (ERES)
Mr. X [George Kennan], "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" (ERES)
Anders Stephanson and John L. Gaddis essays (ERES)
- Feb. 26 The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War
- Sherwin and Holloway essays in L&P
- March 5 Three Crises: Iran, Turkey, and Greece
- Raine, Mark, and Spikas essays in L&P
Z&P, chap. 4 (review chap. 3)
- March 5 First Essay Due**
- March 12 The Mechanics of the Cold War in Europe: I
- Kent, Reynolds, and Naimark essays in L&P
Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, pages TBA
- March 19 The Mechanics of the Cold War in Europe: II
- Dimitrov, Pons, and Maier essays in L&P
- March 26 No Class – Spring Break
- April 2 The Culture of the Cold War: American Film
- Stephen Whitfield, *Cold War Culture*, pages TBA
- April 9 The Culture of the Cold War: Culture as International Weapon
- April 16 The Cold War and the Color Line
- Borstelman, all
- April 23 The Cold War and the Third World: Korea
- Weathersby essay in L&P
Z&P, review pp. 54-56, 62-72
Additional reading to be announced

April 23 **Second Essay Due**

April 30 The Cold War and the Third World

Wood, Hunt and Levin, Jian, and Bethell, and Roxborough essays in L&P
Z&P, chaps. 5-8

May 7 Final Considerations

Z&P, postmortem

Final Essay or Project Due on a Date to be Determined

2/1/2007